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CHAPTER

6

Identifying Student Needs

Individualized Program Planning

Selecting Accommodations and Strategies

2006

IPP

Alberta
EDUCATION

Identifying
Student Needs

Chapter 6

Selecting Accommodations and Strategies

2006

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This resource is primarily intended for:

Teachers	✓
Administrators	✓
Health-related Professionals	✓
Counsellors	✓
Students	
Parents	
General Public	

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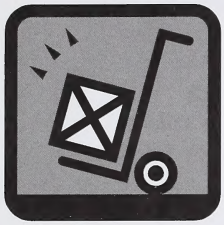
Chapter 6

Selecting Accommodations and Strategies



An accommodation is a change or alteration in the regular way a student is expected to learn, complete assignments or participate in classroom activities. Accommodations include special teaching or assessment strategies, equipment or other supports that remove, or at least lessen, the impact of a student's special education needs. The goal of accommodations is to give students with special education needs the same opportunity to succeed as other students.

Once a student has been identified with a special education need, accommodations should be considered to ensure that the student can access the curriculum and demonstrate knowledge to the best of his or her abilities. Good accommodation decisions are grounded in good instructional decisions.

Typically, accommodations will span all the subject areas and instructional settings that the student is engaged in. Accommodations described in the IPP should include only strategies and supports that differ from what is typically provided in the classroom. It is important to record these key accommodations in the IPP to ensure that the student has access to these significant accommodations on an ongoing basis and that he or she will be eligible to receive these same accommodations during provincial assessments.

Selecting appropriate accommodations involves asking systematic questions about individual students, such as:

- What helps this student learn or perform better?
- What does this student say about what helps him or her learn or show what he or she knows?
- What does this student's parents say about how their child learns?
- What gets in the way of this student demonstrating skills and knowledge?
- What has this student been taught to use?

There are three general types of accommodations:

- environmental accommodations, e.g., alternative seating, adaptive devices
- instructional accommodations, e.g., providing copies of notes, alternative reading materials
- assessment accommodations, e.g., extra time, oral tests.

There can be an overlap in these types; it's possible that a specific accommodation could be both environmental and instructional, and could also affect assessment.

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Environmental Accommodations

The classroom should be nurturing, supportive and successful for all students. To help make this true for students with special education needs, teachers may need to provide various environmental accommodations. Environmental accommodations may be related to the resources and materials the student uses or to the layout and use of classroom space.

Sample environmental accommodations include:

- enlarging reading materials
- arranging for a scribe to write down what the student dictates
- encouraging the use of manipulatives, such as objects for counting
- providing pencil and pen grips
- providing desktop number lines and alphabet charts
- providing access to computers for word processing, spell checkers, graphics, organizers
- providing different types of paper, such as paper with grids, dotted middle lines or raised lines
- using carrels or tables for students who need a quiet spot free from distractions
- allowing a student to stand rather than sit for selected activities
- rearranging the seating plan on a regular basis until the best location for a student is identified.

Audio recordings

Alberta Education, through the Learning Resources Centre (LRC), makes available audio versions of a limited number of student textbooks. These resources, in both audiocassette and CD format, are available on a cost-recovery basis. This audio service is available for students who have an IPP and have audio resources identified as a needed accommodation. Schools who buy the audio resources must agree to use them exclusively for the student for whom they were bought. This service is referred to as "Audio Assistance for Students with Perceptual Disabilities." Under the *Copyright Act of Canada*, a perceptual disability is a disability that prevents or inhibits an individual from reading a literary, musical, dramatic or artistic work in its original format including a disability resulting from an impairment relating to comprehension or the inability to hold or manipulate a book.

For more information

For more information on "Audio Assistance for Students with Perceptual Disabilities," visit www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/audio/audio_index.htm.

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Instructional Accommodations

Instructional accommodations are changes to the way information and concepts are presented or practised to ensure that each student has the opportunities and support he or she needs to learn. This may involve modifying teaching strategies or learning activities in a variety of ways.

Sample instructional accommodations include:

- varying the amount of material to be learned or practised
- breaking instruction into steps
- pairing written instructions with oral instructions
- using peer partners or tutors
- demonstrating or modelling a sample of the required task or activity
- posing questions that require different levels of thinking
- using role-playing to practise new skills
- using advance organizers.

Appendices

See Appendices 6-A and 6-B for a list of other sample accommodations.

Assessment Accommodations

Some students require accommodations that allow classroom assessments to measure and communicate student growth and achievement clearly and realistically. Some students will know what they need in order to demonstrate their knowledge in the classroom and in testing situations. It is important to provide an opportunity for students and parents to suggest or respond to proposed assessment accommodations.

Sample assessment accommodations include:

- allowing extended time
- allowing breaks during the test
- reducing the number of questions
- breaking a test into parts and administering them at separate times
- providing a taped test and making students aware that they may listen to part or all of the tape more than once
- providing a reader or a scribe

Appendices

See Appendix 6-C for sample guidelines for using readers and scribes.

- providing an opportunity to record answers
- providing more detailed instructions and confirming the student's understanding of the test process
- administering the test in a small group setting or to an individual student
- administering the test in a separate room, free from distractions
- providing noise buffers (e.g., headphones).

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Accommodations for provincial achievement tests

Students may be eligible to receive certain accommodations during provincial achievement tests (PATs), provided that:

- the student is identified with an exceptional student code or has had special education needs identified through a psychometric or medical assessment, conducted by a qualified professional, and
- the accommodations being requested are recorded on the student's IPP and being used in the classroom throughout the year.

Appendices

See Appendix 6-D for a list of allowable accommodations for provincial achievement tests and diploma exams.

Requests for accommodations for PATs are approved at the jurisdiction level. To arrange accommodations for a student, the principal must submit a request to the superintendent. This request should include the name of the student and specific accommodations required. If the request involves special format materials (large print, Braille or CD), the principal should complete a Request for Special Format Materials form and submit it to the superintendent for sign-off. Once the request is approved, the form should be forwarded to the Learner Assessment Branch of Alberta Education before the deadline so the appropriate materials can be supplied.

For more information

For more information about accommodations for PATs, including timelines and information about accommodations for students who are not identified with an exceptional student code, visit www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/ach_gib/accom.asp.

Accommodations for diploma examinations

As with PATs, students receiving certain accommodations in the classroom may be eligible for these same accommodations during diploma examinations. In order to be considered, the accommodations requested must be identified in the student's IPP and provided in the classroom throughout the year. *For a list of allowable accommodations, see Appendix 6-D.*

Appendices

Requests for accommodations for diploma examinations are approved by Alberta Education. To apply for accommodations for a student, the principal must submit the Application for Accommodations for Students with Special Diploma Examination Writing Needs form to the Special Cases and Accommodations section by the posted deadline (applications received after that deadline will be denied). The application is then reviewed by Alberta Education staff, taking into consideration a number of factors, including:

- the exceptional student code as indicated in the student's IPP (the IPP itself does not need to be submitted)
- the accommodations routinely provided to the student in the classroom (as indicated on page 1 of the application form)

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- information regarding professional and medical assessments completed on the student, for students who do not have an exceptional student code (results of a psychometric or medical assessment, conducted by a qualified professional, must be submitted with the application form).

For more information

For more information about accommodations for diploma examinations, including deadlines, visit www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/diploma/dip_gib/accommodations.asp or contact the Special Cases and Accommodations section by calling (780) 427–0010 or toll free by dialing 310–0000.

Effective Use of Accommodations

Teachers play a key role in helping students identify and use accommodations appropriately. Similarly, parents, students and other members of the learning team have a role in selecting, monitoring and evaluating the use of accommodations.

Barriers

Understanding some of the common barriers to the effective use of accommodations is an important starting point. Common barriers include the following.

Misunderstanding the purpose

- Parents, students and teachers sometimes perceive that accommodations give students with special education needs an unfair advantage over other students. In reality, accommodations give the student the same opportunity to succeed as other students.
- Parents, students and teachers may also believe that accommodations replace the need to acquire or develop basic skills. Although accommodations are necessary for many students, it is important to balance the use of accommodations with the teaching and practice of basic literacy, numeracy and study skills so that students can develop these skills to their fullest potential.

Selecting accommodations that are not appropriate

- Deciding on appropriate accommodations is not an easy task. Many teachers, psychologists and other personnel report having difficulty translating assessment information into appropriate accommodations. As a result, there is a tendency to rely on the same basic accommodations for all students with particular kinds of special education needs (e.g., learning disabilities), rather than individualizing the accommodations to match the specific learning needs and strengths of the student.

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Not involving the student in the process

- Teachers and other school staff often report that it is difficult to involve students in the decision-making process. However, research indicates that students benefit most from accommodations when they participate in the selection process. Often a student who would benefit from an accommodation does not make full use of it because he or she is self-conscious about doing things differently than peers. Involving students in the selection process provides opportunities for them to learn about and become comfortable using accommodations. It will also help them become better advocates for themselves in future learning situations.

Using accommodations inconsistently

- When accommodations are not used consistently, it is difficult for teachers to determine if they are helping. Also, students need time and opportunities to learn how to use accommodations effectively in a variety of situations, not just on major assignments, such as tests or exams.

Overusing accommodations and possibly reducing expectations

- When too many accommodations are used, particularly at the elementary level, it can reduce expectations for student learning. For example, always providing a scribe might limit opportunities for a student to develop skills and confidence in writing.

Sample strategies

Strategies to Support Effective Use of Accommodations

There are several important considerations related to the selection, implementation and monitoring of accommodations that will help overcome the barriers described above.

Base decisions on an understanding of student strengths and areas of need

- Use information from both formal and informal sources when selecting accommodations. Consult with parents about what they do to help their child complete tasks at home.
- Identify student strengths and learning preferences, and use them to determine appropriate accommodations. Talk with students about what helps them learn better. Understanding students' needs is important in determining what type of accommodation is necessary; however, it is equally important to align the specific accommodations with students' strengths and learning preferences. The chart on the next page shows an example of how learning strengths could be used to select accommodations for students with memory difficulties.

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Sample accommodations for students with memory difficulties	*Consider these accommodations for students who learn best by*		
	seeing	hearing	doing
• Provide one instruction at a time.		✓	
• Build routines into the day for recording information in day-timers or assignment books.	✓		✓
• Provide memory aids for frequently used information such as key vocabulary and schedules.	✓		
• Use visual cues, such as colour coding, photos and drawing sequences, charts and videos.	✓		
• Use auditory and kinesthetic cues in combination. Combine songs with movement and dance patterns.		✓	✓
• Provide regularly scheduled reviews of procedures and concepts (e.g., review previously learned skills and ideas at the start of each day, review new information at the end of the day).		✓	
• Make lists of reminders regularly, and note dates and assignments on a calendar.	✓		✓

- Consider accommodations that are more typically associated with students with visual, hearing or mobility challenges. For instance, students with learning disabilities may benefit from large print materials or the use of a FM system to amplify sound.
- Select accommodations that are the least intrusive for students. If possible, avoid accommodations that isolate students from peers or draw unnecessary attention.

Use a collaborative process

- Educate parents and students about the benefits of using accommodations. Be honest about the difficulties students may encounter.
- Involve relevant specialists in selecting appropriate accommodations based on their knowledge of students' strengths and areas of need, and the demands of the setting.
- Ask parents and students about their preferences regarding accommodations. Respect parents' and students' opinions and attitudes toward accommodations. If the student is not comfortable with an accommodation, it is important to revisit his or her strengths and supports, and then brainstorm alternative accommodations that the student will commit to trying for a period of time before the next review meeting.

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Appendices

See Appendix 6-E for sample questions that parents might ask about accommodations.

Use accommodations consistently and monitor student performance

- Prioritize the introduction of accommodations if more than one accommodation is used. Let students become familiar with one accommodation before introducing another.
- Consult with students about the use of accommodations after they have tried them for a period of time. Compare student performance before and after.
- Set a time to formally review students' performance using accommodations.

Appendices

See Appendix 6-F for a set of sample questions for reviewing the effectiveness of an accommodation.

- Teach students how to use accommodations, especially if they involve assistive technology or assistance from personnel (e.g., scribes or readers). Often an accommodation will be introduced as part of a student's IPP goals. For example, for students needing to build organizational skills, the correct and consistent use of a particular strategy might be the focus of a goal or objective such as, "Suzanne will use a binder-checklist with her study buddy every Friday afternoon to reorganize or add any missing items in her LA binder." Once the student has mastered the use of the strategy or equipment, it will be listed as an accommodation in the IPP.

Differentiating Instruction

Many students with special education needs can achieve the specific learning outcomes of the programs of study, participate in the same kinds of assessment and evaluation activities as their peers, and earn the grades they need to pass and graduate. However, these students may need additional support through adapted programming. The terms "adaptations" and "accommodations" are often used interchangeably. For the purpose of IPPs, accommodations refer to strategies, equipment or other supports that are essential for the student to receive an appropriate education. *Adaptations refer to ongoing, instructional support that may be either planned or informal, and are generally not recorded in the IPP.*

Adapted programming may be developed and used to support an individual student or a group of students in a specialized or regular stream classroom. Frequently, by using features of adapted programming for the whole class, regular classroom teachers can differentiate instruction so that each student in the classroom has the best opportunity to learn according to his or her needs and abilities. In Alberta classrooms, there may be several students in any classroom who are working below or above grade level and these levels

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of readiness may vary across subjects. Ability, learning preferences, strengths and interests vary between students and even within an individual over time. When adapted programming is used to differentiate instruction, all students have equally engaging learning tasks.

Like adapted programming for an individual student, *differentiated instruction involves adjusting instruction to support individual strengths and areas of need*. Many teachers use differentiated instruction to provide a variety of paths for their students to acquire and demonstrate new concepts and skills. Students learn how to take greater responsibility and ownership for their own learning, and participate in all kinds of peer teaching and cooperative learning activities.

To prepare for differentiation, teachers need to collect information about students' readiness levels, strengths, interests and learning preferences. Depending on the age of students, this can be done by surveying past records of student performance, conducting an interest inventory, asking students to respond to an open-ended questionnaire about their learning preferences, or gaining information informally through observation and discussion.

Appendices

See Appendix 6-G for a sample inventory to use with students.

Planning for differentiation

Teachers can use a framework such as the following to plan for differentiation in the classroom.

1. Identify underlying concepts.

In this step, teachers should identify what concepts they would like all students in the class to understand by the end of the learning activity or unit. It is important to separate the *concepts* from the content used to develop these concepts. Different content may be necessary for students with different levels of skill, however, at the end of the learning activity, all students should have a similar understanding of the concept, taking into consideration the level at which they are working.

Sample strategies

2. Choose instructional strategies.

The concepts should be presented in such a way that all students are able to gain an appropriate degree of knowledge. Consider the following samples of effective instructional strategies for differentiating instruction.

- Present new material in short periods of time through varied activities.
- Use materials at a variety of difficulty levels.
- Begin instruction at the individual student's current level of functioning.
- Stand close to students who need extra help.
- Modify pace of instruction.

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- Simplify instructions.
- Write instructions on board.
- Ask students to repeat instructions or paraphrase what has been presented.
- Demonstrate, model or act out instructions.
- Complete the first example with students.
- Use a multisensory approach. For example, a lesson on recycling might include a video about recycling, a display of recycled products and a hands-on activity.
- Present concepts in as concrete a way as possible.
- Use pictures and concrete materials.
- Use different coloured chalk or pens.
- Break information into steps.
- Provide additional time to preview materials and/or complete tasks.
- Adapt level of questioning.
- Use advanced organizers and graphic organizers.
- Provide brainstorming opportunities that allow students to learn from and build on the ideas of others.

3. Choose strategies for student practice.

Use a variety of practice activities and, wherever possible, provide students with guided choices for practice. This may require adapting how students participate, providing adapted materials or adapting goals for individual students. Each student should participate according to his or her level of skill.

The following chart shows examples of different modes for student practice.

Verbalize	Write	Create	Perform	Solve
Oral report Panel discussion Debate Games Brainstorming Oral questions and answers Interviews	Research paper Poems Essays Stories Diaries Plays Cookbooks	Diorama Collage Painting Model Pictograph Mural Bulletin board Games Inventions	Simulation Role-play Drama Pantomime Puppet show Radio Commercials	Puzzles Problems Riddles Games Brainteasers Charades

4. Choose strategies for assessment and evaluation.

- Identify a variety of ways students can demonstrate their mastery of the objectives and their understanding of the concepts. The criteria for evaluation should be determined by the student's needs and abilities.

Appendices

See Appendix 6-H for a sample planning guide for differentiation.

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Strategy instruction

Accommodations and adapted programming can provide students with special education needs the opportunity to explore concepts, participate in the classroom and demonstrate knowledge according to their ability levels. However, for many students it is also important to help them increase their ability levels by building a repertoire of cognitive strategies they can use to be more effective learners. *Cognitive strategies are tactics that support learners as they develop and internalize procedures for performing higher-level tasks*. There are a wide variety of cognitive strategies to choose from, especially in the areas of reading comprehension, problem solving, study skills and test taking. For sample strategies, see the following Alberta Education resources:

For more information

- *Teaching Students with Learning Disabilities* (1996), Book 6 in the *Programming for Students with Special Needs* series, pages 91–215
- *Unlocking Potential: Key Components of Programming for Students with Learning Disabilities* (2003), pages 53–71
- *Teaching Students with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder* (2004), Book 10 in the *Programming for Students with Special Needs* series, pages 27–49, 51–71 and 73–109.

Teaching cognitive strategies can help students with special education needs take ownership for their role in learning, and become more active and purposeful learners, thinkers and problem solvers. Strategy instruction is initially teacher-driven, with the teacher providing structured opportunities to learn, practise and develop strategies. However, students should be encouraged to become aware of and monitor their own strategic processes as much as possible. Students need to know the purpose and limitations of the strategies, as well as when and where to use different strategies, so that they can eventually learn to rely on themselves rather than on the teacher.

Consider the following guidelines for teaching learning strategies.

- Match strategies to the requirements of the learning task. For example, if the learning goal involves retaining the main ideas in a piece of factual writing, the student might be directed to use a chunking strategy to increase the amount of information held in short-term memory. The strategy must be developmentally appropriate for the student.
- Provide strategy instruction consistent with the student's current knowledge and skill level. While learning strategies designed for specific content areas can be effective, initially more general learning strategies should be taught.
- Provide opportunities for extensive practice in strategy use. Practice helps students to spontaneously produce the strategy and to generalize the strategy across a wide range of content areas and situations.
- Prompt students to use specific strategies at appropriate times. Some students with special education needs may require explicit prompting to help develop their ability to transfer the strategy to different but related tasks (Gagné and Driscoll 1988).

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- Record strategies that work particularly well for individual students in their IPP. This is valuable information that teachers in future grades can use to ensure they are building on students' previous success.

Understanding Modified Programming

Even with accommodations, differentiated instruction and learning strategies, not all students with special education needs are able to meet all of the requirements of the regular programs of study. Some students may not be able to work at grade level or pass the required courses for graduation. These students may require a modified program to meet their educational needs.

A modified program has learning outcomes that are significantly different from the provincial programs of study and are specifically selected to meet the student's special education needs. Changes to the outcomes are designed to provide the student the opportunity to participate meaningfully and productively across a variety of learning experiences and environments. Modifications may include changes in instruction level, content and/or performance criteria.

Common examples of modified programming include:

- modifying learning outcomes by simplifying key concepts, major understandings and skills in content areas
- omitting assignments that require timed situations or limiting assignments to a certain type
- adapting or simplifying texts to address students' level of ability and understanding
- lowering the reading level of assignments, quizzes or tests.

For more information

Students who are gifted may also require modified programming. See Chapter 11: *Planning for Students Who are Gifted* for more discussion of the IPP process for students who are gifted.

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Selecting Accommodations and Strategies

These tools are available in PDF format at www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/resource.asp and on the CD–ROM packaged with the print version of this resource.

The purpose of these sample tools is to enrich the IPP process. These tools should be used selectively and can be adapted to best meet the needs of individual students. Many of these tools will be used informally as part of the IPP development process and not as products for the student's permanent school record.

6-A Sample General Accommodations

6-B Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations

6-C Sample Guidelines for Using Readers and Scribes

6-D Accommodations for Writing Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations

6-E Sample Questions Parents Might Ask About Accommodations

6-F Sample Form for Reviewing the Effectiveness of an Accommodation

6-G What Works for Me Inventory

6-H Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation

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Appendix 6-A

Sample General Accommodations

Name _____ Date _____

Completed by _____

Environmental

- ❑ Seat student near teacher
- ❑ Seat student in an area with minimal distractions
- ❑ Seat student near a positive peer model
- ❑ Stand near student when giving instructions
- ❑ Provide access to study carrel
- ❑ Use a desktop easel or slant board to raise reading materials
- ❑ Allow student to move around the classroom
- ❑ Modify text materials by adding, adapting or substituting information
- ❑ Make materials self-correcting
- ❑ Highlight important concepts and information and/or passages
- ❑ Prepare recordings of reading/textbook materials, tasks
- ❑ Provide an extra textbook for home use
- ❑ Provide graph paper or large spaced paper for writing
- ❑ Allow use of personal word lists, cue cards
- ❑ Increase use of pictures, diagrams, concrete manipulators
- ❑ Increase print size in photocopying
- ❑ Provide a visual summary of the daily schedule
- ❑ Other _____

Instructional

- ❑ Vary amount of material to be learned
- ❑ Vary amount of material to be practised
- ❑ Vary time for practice activities
- ❑ Use advance organizers and graphic organizers
- ❑ Provide an outline or study guide
- ❑ Use assignment notebooks or homework checklists
- ❑ Repeat directions or have student repeat directions
- ❑ Shorten directions
- ❑ Highlight instructions
- ❑ Pair written instructions with oral instructions
- ❑ Reduce number of tasks required in assignments
- ❑ Break long-term assignments into shorter tasks
- ❑ Use strategies to enhance recall, e.g., cues, cloze

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Appendix 6-A

Sample General Accommodations (continued) page 2/2

Instructional (continued)

- ❑ Accept dictated or parent-assisted homework assignments
- ❑ Provide extra assignment time
- ❑ Provide models of written work or other assignments to guide students (e.g., sentence, paragraph, book report, short story, poem, essay)
- ❑ Permit student to print
- ❑ Provide a student buddy for reading
- ❑ Provide access to peer or cross-aged tutoring
- ❑ Provide time with a teacher assistant
- ❑ Provide nonverbal reminders for student to stay on task
- ❑ Provide immediate positive reinforcement for behaviour (e.g., verbal praise, tangible reinforcers, notes home, progress charts)
- ❑ Implement self-monitoring systems so student takes responsibility for own behaviour
- ❑ Other _____

Assessment

- ❑ Adjust the test appearance, e.g., margins, spacing
- ❑ Adjust the test design (T/F, multiple choice, matching)
- ❑ Adjust to recall with cues, cloze, word lists
- ❑ Vary test administration, e.g., small groups, individual
- ❑ Record test questions
- ❑ Reduce number of test items or select items specific to ability level
- ❑ Give extra test time
- ❑ Permit breaks during tests
- ❑ Adjust readability of test
- ❑ Allow alternative formats such as webs or key points in place of essays or long answers
- ❑ Read test questions
- ❑ Allow use of a scribe or a reader
- ❑ Allow oral exams
- ❑ Practise taking similar test questions
- ❑ Other _____

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Appendix 6-B

Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations

Name _____ Date _____

Completed by _____

Reading Difficulties	Written Expression Difficulties	Fine and Gross Motor Difficulties
❑ Use less difficult/alternative reading material ❑ Identify/define words prior to reading ❑ Reduce amount of reading required ❑ Allow alternative methods of data collection (dictation, interviews, fact sheets) ❑ Set time limits for specific task completion ❑ Enlarge text of worksheets, reading material and tests ❑ Limit words on a page ❑ Extend time to complete assignments ❑ Read directions several times at start of assignments and tests ❑ Provide additional repetition and guided practice of directions, skills and concepts ❑ Use assistive technology (optical character recognition system, books on tape/CD, screen readers)	❑ Reduce volume or requirements for written work, e.g., by accepting an outline or point-form notes ❑ Break long-term assignments into manageable tasks ❑ Extend timelines for completing assignments ❑ Offer alternative assignments ❑ Allow student to work on homework at school ❑ Allow alternative methods of data collection (dictation, interviews, fact sheets) ❑ Permit use of scribe or word processor for answers ❑ Waive spelling, punctuation and paragraphing requirements ❑ Use assistive technology (word processor, spell-check device, grammar-check device, text-to-speech software)	❑ Use assistive and adaptive devices (slant boards/desktop easels) to display written material – pencil or pen adapted in size or grip diameter – alternative keyboard – portable word processor ❑ Set realistic and mutually agreed-upon expectations for neatness and organization ❑ Reduce or eliminate the need to copy from a text or board – provide copies of notes – permit student to photocopy a peer's notes – provide carbon/NCR paper to a peer to allow a duplicate copy of notes to be made ❑ Extend time to complete assignments ❑ Alter the size, shape or location of the space provided for answers ❑ Accept keyword responses instead of complete sentences ❑ Allow student to type answers or to answer orally instead of in writing

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Appendix 6-B

Sample Academic and Instructional Accommodations (continued) page 2/2

Attention Difficulties	Memory Difficulties
❑ Provide alternative seating – near teacher – facing teacher – at front of class, between well-focused students, away from distractions ❑ Provide additional or personal work space (quiet area for study, extra seat or table, "time-out" spot, study carrels) ❑ Permit movement during class activities and testing sessions ❑ Provide directions in written form – on board – on worksheets – copied in assignment book by student ❑ Set time limits for specific task completion ❑ Extend time to complete tests and assignments ❑ Use multiple testing sessions for longer tests ❑ Use place markers, special paper, graph paper or writing templates to allow student to maintain position better or focus attention ❑ Provide cues, e.g., arrows, stop signs, on worksheets and tests ❑ Provide a quiet, distraction-free area for completing assignments and tests ❑ Allow student to wear noise buffer device such as headphones to screen out distracting sounds ❑ Provide checklists for long, detailed assignments	❑ Provide a written outline ❑ Provide directions in written form – on board – on worksheets – copied in assignment book by student ❑ Provide a specific process for turning in completed assignments ❑ Provide checklists for long, detailed assignments ❑ Read and discuss standard directions several times at start of exam ❑ Provide cues, e.g., arrows, stop signs, on worksheets and tests ❑ Allow student to use reference aids such as dictionaries, word processors or vocabulary cue cards

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Appendix 6-C

Sample Guidelines for Using Readers and Scribes

If a **reader** is used as an accommodation to assist a student during an assessment or test, consider the following guidelines.

- The reader must read the test questions verbatim (exactly as they appear on the test). A reader may not add emphasis, inflection, or read in such a way as to prompt or guide the student. A reader may not ask leading questions, provide suggestions, provide interpretations or provide word definitions of any kind.
- The reader must read in such a way that the student understands the beginning and end of each sentence and paragraph. Without leading the student, the reader must be aware of and obey all punctuation, and read in such a way that the student understands the use and purpose of the punctuation.
- The reader may spell words when asked to do so by the student. Spelling of words may be necessary for commonly misspelled words and similar sounding words such as "to," "two" and "too," or "there," "they're" and "their."
- The reader may repeat readings as often as necessary and must read consistently in the same way each time.
- Students should complete the test in the allotted time.
- A test that is administered using a reader should take place in a separate writing area so that other students who are writing the test are not disturbed.

If a **scribe** is used as an accommodation to assist a student in completing an assignment or test, consider the following guidelines.

- The scribe must record the student's response verbatim (exactly as the student dictates). A scribe may not reword, correct grammar, add punctuation, indicate paragraphs or otherwise change a student's answer.
- If the student uses a word that the scribe is not familiar with, the scribe should ask the student to spell it.
- A scribe may not ask leading questions, or provide suggestions or interpretations of any kind.
- The student must indicate the beginning and end of each sentence and paragraph as well as indicating all punctuation marks.
- The student shall review the scribed work and make changes if necessary. At this time, if a student indicates a specific spelling of a word, or makes changes to grammatical elements, sentence structure or paragraph placement, the scribe shall change the response to reflect the student's instructions.
- A test that is administered using a scribe should take place in a separate writing area so that other students who are writing the test are not disturbed.

For information on using readers and scribes on provincial achievement tests and diploma exams, visit www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/ach_gib/accom.asp.

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Appendix 6-D

Accommodations for Writing Provincial Achievement Tests and Diploma Examinations

Alberta Education has approved the following accommodations for eligible students during provincial achievement tests and diploma examinations.

Accommodation 1:	CD version of the test for student with visual impairment
Accommodation 2:	CD version of the test for student with learning or physical disability
Accommodation 3:	additional writing time
Accommodation 4:	**Diploma examinations:** word processor **Provincial achievement tests:** calculator/multiplication table (for Grade 6 Mathematics Part A only)
Accommodation 5:	scribe
Accommodation 6:	large-print version
Accommodation 7:	Braille version
Accommodation 8:	reader
Accommodation 9:	sign language interpreter
Accommodation 10:	taped response

Note: Isolation (i.e., writing the test alone in a distraction-free space) is no longer considered to be an accommodation. Schools may choose to provide it for any student who needs it, either alone or in conjunction with other approved accommodations.

For the most up-to-date information, visit www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/testing/achievement/ach_gib/accom.asp.

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Appendix 6-E

Sample Questions Parents Might Ask About Accommodations

- What are accommodations?
- Have my child's classroom accommodations been documented on his or her IPP? Why is this important?
- What are the benefits and limitations of using accommodations with my child?
- How have my child's strengths been considered when choosing accommodations?
- How can my child be involved in the selection and evaluation of accommodations?
- Which accommodations are priorities for my child and should be introduced first?
- How will the team make sure other school staff working with my child understand and use these accommodations?
- How does this accommodation fit into the overall culture of my child's classroom? How will my child's accommodations be explained to other children in the class? Will other students in the class be receiving similar accommodations?
- How/when will you be reviewing and evaluating the accommodations?
- How can I reinforce use of accommodations at home?

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Appendix 6-F

Sample Form for Reviewing the Effectiveness of an Accommodation

Name _____ Date _____

Teacher name _____

Type of accommodation _____

1. Does the student want to use the accommodation? _____
2. Does the student have easy access to the accommodation whenever needed? _____
3. How often does the student access the accommodation? _____
4. Can the student use the accommodation independently? _____
5. Does the student require monitoring while using the accommodation? _____
6. Does the accommodation seem to be facilitating independence? How? _____

   _____
7. Is the accommodation transferable to other classes/grades? _____
8. Is it improving the student's quality of learning? _____
9. Are there barriers to the use of the accommodation? Specify. _____

   _____
10. What can be done to address the barriers? _____

    _____

Student's comments _____

_____

Parent's comments _____

_____

Teacher's comments _____

_____

Other _____

Update _____

_____

_____

Record a summary of this information on the IPP so that the accommodations that benefit this student will be provided for next year's programming plan.

_____

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Appendix 6-G

What Works for Me Inventory

Name: _____ Date: _____

A. How I look after myself

- How much sleep do I need? _____
- What kind of food makes me feel the most alert? _____
- What snacks are good energy sources? _____
- What times of the day do I need to eat? _____
- What time of the day do I have the most energy? _____
- What time of the day do I have the least energy? _____
- What type of exercise makes me feel energized? _____
- What kinds of activities help me relax? _____

B. Tools that help me learn

- What writing tool works best for me (type of pen, pencil, colour of ink)? _____
- What kind of paper helps me keep organized (wide-ruled, unlined, wide margins, prepunched)?

  _____
- What colour paper do I find the easiest to read? _____
- What binder system works for me? _____
- What other supplies help me keep organized, e.g., white-out, self-stick removable notes, ruler?

  _____
- What calculator works best for me, e.g., size, features? _____
- What spell checker works best for me? _____
- What is my favourite dictionary? _____
- What other reference books help me learn? _____
- What computer programs are helpful to my learning? _____

C. In the classroom

- What seat in the classroom works best for me? _
- What do I read best from?

  ___ chalkboard ___ overhead ___ projector ___ chart paper ___ my own copy
- Does the colour of ink (or chalk) make a difference? __
- Does the type of printing, e.g., printed, handwritten or typed, make a difference?

  _____
- Does the size and spacing of print make a difference? _____

From Alberta Learning, *Make School Work for You: A Resource for Junior and Senior High Students Who Want to be More Successful Learners* (Edmonton, AB: Alberta Learning, 2001), pp. 85–86.

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Appendix 6-G

What Works for Me Inventory (continued) page 2/2

D. Rank in order from 1 to 12 which directions work best for me:

_____ teacher explains aloud
_____ teacher writes directions on the board
_____ teacher does example on the board
_____ teacher asks another student to demonstrate
_____ teacher asks all students to try a sample at their desks
_____ I read the directions while the teacher reads them
_____ I read the directions on my own
_____ teacher shows me at my desk
_____ another student explains a second time and answers my questions
_____ I watch what another student does
_____ I try it on my own and then check with the teacher
_____ I try it on my own and then compare with another student

E. Tricks I use to keep myself organized:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

F. Tricks I use to keep myself focused and on task in class:

_____
_____
_____

G. Special things that teachers can do to help me learn:

_____
_____
_____
_____

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Appendix 6-H

Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation

As you design learning activities, consider students' individual needs and learning profiles to determine the strategies and adaptations that will contribute to success.

Key Concepts

- Identify the key concepts of the learning activity.
  - ❑ Consider how the activity has been designed to motivate and engage student interest.
  - ❑ Determine how to present an overview of the learning activity.
  - ❑ Ensure that the learning activity provides opportunities for students to relate the key concepts to their own experiences or understanding.
  - ❑ Build in opportunities to make connections between what the students know and what they are learning.

Outcomes

- Determine the outcomes that students can reasonably accomplish.
  - ❑ Select fewer outcomes, partial outcomes or outcomes from a different grade level if necessary.
- Determine what the students will be able to demonstrate as a result of this learning activity.
  - ❑ Consider the accommodations, modifications and adaptations necessary to ensure student success in achieving all or part of the outcomes.

Assessment

- Decide what evidence will show whether the students have achieved the outcomes.
- Determine the best way for students to demonstrate their learning.
  - ❑ Provide assessment options for students to "show what they know."
- Make necessary preparations for alternative testing procedures, resources and materials.
  - ❑ Does the student need:
    - ___ a tape recording of the test
    - ___ a scribe to write down his or ideas or answers
    - ___ the test questions read aloud
    - ___ a time extension
    - ___ fewer questions?
- Record important assignment and text due dates on a master calendar and have students transpose these dates into their agendas.
  - ❑ Show students how to plan for longer assignments by "back-planning" on a calendar.
  - ❑ Show students how to study for an upcoming test.
  - ❑ Provide students with a study guide of important skills and concepts.

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Appendix 6-H

Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation (continued) page 2/4

- Determine the focus of the assessment for evaluation purposes.
  For example, if you are evaluating students on their understanding of the content of material, do not penalize for spelling errors or missing punctuation.
- Select or develop rubrics, exemplars and checklists to support student evaluation.
- Provide immediate, specific and constructive feedback.
  - ❑ Emphasize the quality of work and perseverance rather than the quantity.
- Provide opportunities for student self-reflection and self-evaluation.
  - ❑ Consider necessary alternate assessment options to accommodate different learning styles, interests or strengths.
  - ❑ Share assignment criteria lists, checklists, standards and exemplars with students.

Learning Activities

- Select appropriate instructional strategies and learning activities that will create opportunities for students to successfully achieve the target outcomes.
  - ❑ Decide how students will demonstrate their learning.
  - ❑ Ensure opportunities for students to use different learning modalities, e.g., visual, auditory, etc.
  - ❑ Present and support key concepts and instructions using demonstration, oral and written steps, exemplars of completed assignments.
  - ❑ Break down assignments or tasks into smaller, more manageable parts.
  - ❑ Give clear, concrete instructions.
    - ___ Provide a visual reference of the sequence of key steps in completing the assignment.
    - ___ Provide a checklist of assignment parts for students to self-monitor as tasks are completed.
    - ___ Support written instructions with picture prompts or highlight directions using a colour-coding system.
    - ___ Tape record directions or lectures for playback.
    - ___ Repeat instructions.
    - ___ Have students recall instructions in sequence.
  - ❑ Model and demonstrate to ensure understanding of directions.
  - ❑ Check in with student regularly to check on task understanding, and to provide feedback and clarification on specific aspects of the assignment.
  - ❑ Highlight key points of lesson orally and visually.
  - ❑ Select extension activities that will reinforce and extend learning.
  - ❑ Write assignments and homework on chart or blackboard. Ensure that students write down assignments in their agendas.
  - ❑ Help students stay on task by employing a cueing strategy.
- Consider how the students will be organized for instruction and the type of grouping that will be most effective (partner, small group, large group).
  - ❑ Use flexible groupings to determine the best fit for a particular activity. Decisions about grouping students may be based on the following factors, including learning preferences, interests, readiness, learning needs.

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Appendix 6-H

Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation (continued) page 3/4

Resources

- Decide on the resources that will be used for the learning activity including oral, print, media texts and community resources.
  - ❑ Locate necessary materials and resources to support different reading levels, learning styles and student needs.
  - ❑ Consider using a graphic organizer to present information.
- Prepare resources to assist students with learning difficulties.
  - ❑ Rewrite materials at a lower reading level.
  - ❑ Provide an advanced organizer for note taking, e.g., fill-in-the-blank or cloze style.
  - ❑ Highlight passages of text.
  - ❑ Reformat handouts and tests as necessary. For example, provide lines for written responses, put one question per page, rewrite questions or information at a lower reading level, enlarge print and spacing between lines of print.
  - ❑ Determine Web-based supports (e.g., simulations).
- Ensure that students have the assistive tools and devices to support their learning style or areas of need.

  ____ highlighters, calculators, self-stick removable notes, ruler, markers, erasable pens, adapted scissors, graph paper, special lined paper, pencil grip, date/number line taped to desk
  ____ a copy of the lecture notes
  ____ enlarged or reduced text
  ____ scribe
  ____ tape recording
  ____ picture prompts
  ____ manipulatives
  ____ overlays
  ____ computers

Timeline

- Determine an approximate timeline for the learning activity.
  - ❑ Determine whether there is a need to compact or extend the study based on student interests or areas of need.
- Consider the pace of the learning activity and the areas of need of the students.
  - ❑ Consider ways to change the pace and allow students to focus on task for more condensed periods of time if necessary.
  - ❑ Prepare an assignment sheet with task increments and timeline to guide students' completion of the assignment.
  - ❑ Provide opportunity for frequent breaks if necessary.
  - ❑ Provide time warnings for task completion.
  - ❑ Extend deadlines for those students who require more time to complete assignments.

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Appendix 6-H

Instructional Planning Guide for Differentiation (continued) page 4/4

Learning Environment

- Consider the classroom environment and individual student work space.
  - ❑ Provide a quiet work station like a study carrel or corner of the classroom.
  - ❑ Plan seating arrangements for those students with attention issues, considering traffic patterns and overt distractions, e.g., windows, door, hallway, computer.
  - ❑ Partner students with a peer for support and guidance.
- Consider the organization of notebooks, textbooks, materials and supplies.
  - ❑ Provide an alternate place for students to keep books and supplies, e.g., storage tub or book bins.
  - ❑ Create a system for colour-coding notebooks.
  - ❑ Provide a consistent place to hand in assignments.

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Chapters in the resource include:

Getting Started

Introduction

1: Working Through the IPP Process

Building the Learning Team

2: Encouraging Parent Involvement

3: Supporting Student Participation

4: Creating a Network of Support

Identifying Student Needs

5: Using Classroom Assessment to Support the IPP Process

6: Selecting Accommodations and Strategies

7: Making Goals Meaningful, Measurable and Manageable

Looking to the Future

8: Planning for Transitions

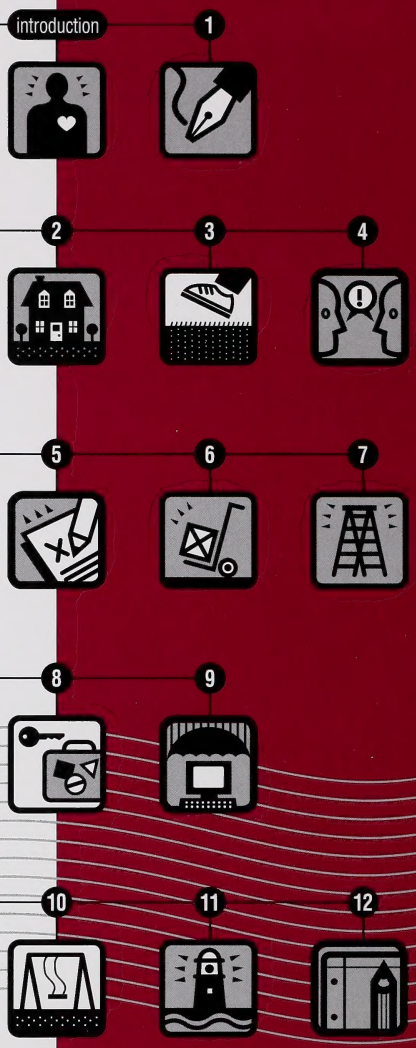
9: Infusing Assistive Technology for Learning into the IPP Process

Developing New Solutions

10: Getting Off to a Good Start in ECS

11: Planning for Students who are Gifted

12: Promising Practices for Junior and Senior High School



A PDF of the complete resource *Individualized Program Planning* is available on Alberta Education's Web site at www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/specialneeds/resource.asp.

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